



Taos Field Office



***Carson
National Forest***

News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Forest Service Recreation Opportunities Limited in Questa Ranger District Due to High Water

*BLM and Forest Service announce closures in area and
list sites that will be open for Memorial Day Weekend*

Taos, NM – Due to continued high water and the danger of flooding in several recreation areas of the Questa Ranger District (Carson National Forest), a number of campgrounds, roads and recreation areas are closed, effective immediately, and will remain closed through the Memorial Day weekend.

High runoff will continue for several more weeks and is likely to peak over the weekend, which may also affect recreational opportunities on the Rio Grande. The threat of thunderstorms this weekend adds to the threat; anyone planning visits to the Taos/Red River area will need to call the BLM or the Forest Service for the latest updates.

The following Forest Service recreation areas in the Questa Ranger District are closed:

- Cabresto Canyon, Forest Roads 134 and 134A
- Cabresto Lake area
- Pioneer Canyon, Forest Road 485
- Malette Canyon, Forest Road 597
- Junebug, Fawn Lakes and Lower Hondo Campgrounds
- Dispersed campsites along south side of NM Highway 38 from Questa Ranger District Office to Red River city limits

- more -

“All rivers and streams are running at record levels with increased volume and high velocity,” said Martin Chavez, Carson National Forest Supervisor. “The rivers are extremely dangerous and all visitors, young and old, are asked to use caution – with parents keeping a close watch on children at all times.”

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has not closed any sites at this time, but cautions visitors to be alert for the possibility of rapidly rising water.

BLM Areas Open to Camping

BLM camping sites at **Santa Cruz Lake** and in the **Orilla Verde** and **Wild Rivers** recreation areas are available on a first-come, first-served basis (no reservations). Developed sites will be filled first through Friday, May 27, 2005. A limited number of secondary (undeveloped) sites will then be assigned over the Memorial Day weekend.

The Wild Rivers Recreation Area has five developed campgrounds (shelter, table, grill, water and restrooms) and six undeveloped sites. The Orilla Verde Recreation Area has six developed campgrounds. Primitive camping is allowed only at designated sites. One campground (North Lake Campground) is available at the Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area, with 12 campsites.

Forest Service Campgrounds Open in Questa Ranger District include Elephant Rock, Columbine, Bobita, Goat Hill, Cebolla Mesa campgrounds, and the McCrystal Creek and Cimarron campgrounds in the Valle Vidal Unit.

In the **Camino Real Ranger District**, the following areas are open: Comales, Agua Piedra, La Junta, Upper La Junta, Las Trampas and Capulin campground site in Taos Canyon. The Santa Barbara Campground will remain closed due to continued rock slide along Forest Road 116 leading to the campsite. Duran campground will remain closed. Hodges dispersed recreation area will be open, but most of the area is wet and boggy due to the high moisture and runoff.

Trail conditions across the district are typically wet with patchy snow at higher elevations. No trails have been cleared of winter downfall. Travel on motorized trails with ATVs or dirt bikes is not recommended at this time.

The Canjilon Lakes on the **Canjilon Ranger District** will be open for Memorial Day weekend, but potable water is not available. Trout Lakes will remain closed due to wet road conditions.

Hopewell Lake on the **Tres Piedras Ranger District** will be open with no water available. The El Rito campground site on the **El Rito Ranger District** will also be open with no potable water available.

Visitors to the Carson National Forest and BLM recreation sites should call the Forest Service or BLM for updates:

USDA - Forest Service

Supervisor's Office (505) 758-6200
Questa Ranger District (505) 586-0520
Tres Piedras District (505) 758-8678
Canjilon District (505) 684-2489
El Rito District (505) 581-4554
Camino Real District (505) 587-2255

Bureau of Land Management

Taos Field Office 505.758.8851

Orilla Verde 505.751.4899
Wild Rivers 505.770.1600
Santa Cruz Lake 505.927.3314